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SUBJECT: RUSSIAN DUMA MEMBERS WANT US-RUSSIA RELATIONS BASED  
ON TRUST AND DIALOGUE

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¶1. (SBU) Summary: At the invitation of Duma Foreign Relations Committee Chair Konstantin Kosachev, the Ambassador met for 90 minutes with a delegation of Duma members traveling with Kosachev to the U.S. to meet with members of Congress. Discussion topics ranged from imports of U.S. chicken to Afghanistan, with considerable attention focused on the recent announcement of deployments in 2015 of SA-3 missile systems to Romania. Kosachev, joined by other members, was extremely critical of the announcement, questioning timing and justifications. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador Beyrle opened the 90-minute session, conducted in Russian but closed to the press, by giving an overview of U.S.-Russian relations since the inauguration of President Obama. He emphasized achievements of the Bilateral Presidential Commission, and noted the importance of completing a START agreement, working closely to address the Iranian nuclear threat and instability in Afghanistan. Kosachev (United Russia) welcomed the Ambassador's comments, himself stressing the need for constructive results, not just discussion, on such matters as European security, non-proliferation, and energy markets. He supports the idea of establishing a U.S. Congressional Caucus on Russia. Kosachev and his delegation will meet with Rep. Howard Berman and other members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee the week of February 22.

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Real Confidence and Cooperation Needed  
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¶3. (SBU) Duma Deputy Leonid Slutskiy (Liberal Democratic Party) questioned the real impact of the "reset." He argued that comprehensive common goals have not yet been set by both governments. He cited the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, the 1-2-3 Agreement, and the failure by U.S. poultry firms to meet Russian sanitary requirements. He noted that the situation with poultry products has been improving, after U.S. firms acknowledged Russia's concerns over chlorine. Slutskiy asked the Ambassador to study the initiative by Senators Kerry and Levin on eliminate the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in order to establish normal trade relations between the U.S. and Russia. He expressed interest in meeting with Kerry and Levin when in Washington. He urged the U.S. Trade Representative to study the proposal, commenting that outdated amendments adversely affect U.S. economic interests.

¶4. (SBU) Deputy Andrey Klimov (United Russia) reinforced the initiative of Russian and EU MPs to invite members of the U.S. Congress to their joint European Parliament-Russian Duma sessions in order to remove any suspicions that Russia is

attempting to foment discord between the U.S. and EU. He reported that the next joint session with U.S. participation is scheduled for December 2010.

15. (SBU) Deputy Semyon Bagdasarov (Just Russia) spoke about Afghanistan, and the involvement of Russian companies in support of Coalition Forces. According to Bagdasarov, Russia is already providing a great deal of assistance to ISAF troops. He cited the threat of terrorism and narcotic trafficking into Russia as increasing. He argued that the war in Afghanistan will last long time and Coalition Forces should be more active in the northern parts of the country fighting the producers of heroin and destroying starting points of narco-trafficking. Both sides should work together to prevent the emergence of new terrorist activity in Central Asia. He argued passionately that Russia is not interested in Iran's nuclear capabilities. He is concerned that Iran is actively arming under the group of religious radicals and we must prevent Iran from disintegrating by acting very carefully.

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Missile Defense and START  
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16. (SBU) Chairman Kosachev asked the Ambassador about the "shocking uncooperativeness and secretiveness of U.S. Missile Defense (MD) plans in Romania and Bulgaria." He lamented that Russian leaders, including FM Lavrov, learned of the news from media reports. He recalled the September 2009 disclosure information about a second Iranian nuclear facility in Qom as a similar unilateral act that was incompatible with an overall atmosphere of "reset" and the improvement of trust and confidence between the U.S. and Russia. Such acts by the U.S., he argued, threatened the gradual rapprochement of positions on Iran, Afghanistan and especially START.

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17. (SBU) Other committee members agreed with Kosachev's concerns. Bagdasarov questioned the timing of the announcement. Why before START is finished? He argued that Iran does not present a threat that would be mitigated by SA-3's (ignoring Ambassador's explanation that the deployment was scheduled for 2015, and that we want to begin now to prepare for a possible threat down the road.)

BEYRLE